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Amend
10/10/01
12/9/02

IN THE CLAIMS:

Each of the claims that remains pending and under consideration in the above-referenced application is reproduced below, in clean form, for the sake of convenience. A marked-up version of each amended claim is also enclosed herewith to clearly show each change that has been made thereto.

Please enter the claims as follows:

1. An apparatus for polishing one or more layers of a semiconductor device structure, comprising:
a polishing pad;
a subpad support located adjacent said polishing pad, said subpad support including a subpad retention element; and
a subpad removably secured to said subpad support by way of said subpad retention element, said subpad being located between said subpad support and said polishing pad.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said polishing pad comprises one of a web format polishing pad and a belt format polishing pad.
3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said subpad retention element comprises a clamp configured to retain at least a portion of a periphery of said subpad.
4. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said subpad retention element comprises negative pressure applicable to a bottom surface of said subpad through said subpad support.

5. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said subpad retention element mechanically engages a complementary structure on or adjacent to a bottom surface of said subpad.

6. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a substantially rigid structure on a bottom surface of said subpad.

7. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said substantially rigid structure is secured to said bottom surface of said subpad.

8. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said substantially rigid structure comprises a polymer.

9. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said substantially rigid structure comprises a metal.

10. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said substantially rigid structure comprises a dense region of said subpad at said bottom surface thereof.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said subpad support comprises at least one lip configured to at least partially prevent lateral movement of a subpad assembled with and secured to said subpad support.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said at least one lip substantially completely laterally surrounds a peripheral edge of said subpad.

13. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein a bottom surface of said subpad is substantially free of adhesive material.

14. The apparatus of claim 1, including a subpad access element.

15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said subpad access element is configured to at least partially move said polishing pad away from said subpad support.

16. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said subpad access element moves a polishing pad support so as to at least partially move said polishing pad away from said subpad support.

17. A subpad support for use in an apparatus for polishing one or more layers of a semiconductor device structure, comprising a subpad retention element.

18. The subpad support of claim 17, wherein said subpad retention element is configured to removably retain a subpad.

19. (Amended) The subpad support of claim 17, wherein said subpad retention element mechanically engages a corresponding feature on or adjacent to a bottom surface of a subpad to be assembled with the subpad support.

20. (Amended) The subpad support of claim 17, wherein said subpad retention element is configured to apply a negative pressure to a bottom surface of a subpad engaged by said subpad retention element.

21. The subpad support of claim 17, wherein said subpad retention element comprises a clamp element configured to engage at least a portion of a periphery of a subpad assembled with the subpad support.

Claim 21
22. The subpad support of claim 17, comprising a lip configured to at least partially prevent lateral movement of a subpad assembled with the subpad support.

23. The subpad support of claim 22, wherein said lip is configured to substantially completely surround a peripheral edge of said subpad.

Please add the following new claims:

-- 40. (New) An apparatus for polishing one or more layers of a semiconductor device structure, comprising:
a polishing pad;
a subpad support located adjacent said polishing pad, said subpad support including a substantially planar subpad support surface and a subpad retention element associated with said subpad support surface; and
a subpad disposed on said subpad support surface so as to be positionable between said subpad support and said polishing pad, said subpad retention element being configured to removably secure said subpad support on said subpad support surface.

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41. (New) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein said subpad retention element comprises negative pressure applicable to a backing of said subpad through said subpad support.

42. (New) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein said subpad retention element mechanically engages a complementary structure on or adjacent to a bottom surface of said subpad.

43. (New) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein said subpad support comprises at least one lip configured to at least partially prevent lateral movement of a subpad assembled with and secured to said subpad support.

44. (New) The apparatus of claim 43, wherein said at least one lip substantially completely laterally surrounds a peripheral edge of said subpad.

45. (New) The apparatus of claim 40, wherein a backing of said subpad is substantially free of adhesive material.

46. (New) The apparatus of claim 40, including a subpad access element.

47. (New) The apparatus of claim 46, wherein said subpad access element is configured to at least partially move said polishing pad away from said subpad support.

48. (New) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein said subpad access element moves a polishing pad support so as to at least partially move said polishing pad away from said subpad support.

49. (New) A subpad support for use in an apparatus for polishing one or more layers of a semiconductor device structure, comprising:
a substantially planar support surface configured to receive a subpad; and
a subpad retention element associated with said support surface so as to retain the subpad in position thereon.

50. (New) The subpad support of claim 49, wherein said subpad retention element is configured to removably retain the subpad.

51. (New) The subpad support of claim 49, wherein said subpad retention element mechanically engages a corresponding feature on or adjacent to a bottom surface of the subpad.

52. (New) The subpad support of claim 49, comprising wherein said subpad retention element is configured to at least partially prevent lateral movement of the subpad.

53. (New) The subpad support of claim 52, wherein said subpad retention element is configured to substantially completely surround a peripheral edge of the subpad.

54. (New) The subpad support of claim 49, wherein said subpad retention element is configured to apply a negative pressure to a bottom surface of the subpad.--